Dissertation Assessment Review  
Ph.D. Program in Theatre

1) **Learning Goals**

**A. Dissertation Learning Goals**
Students who complete the dissertation will be able:
1. To produce a scholarly work that analyzes theatre and performance texts, traditions, artists, archives, and collections, with originality and precision, and that engages theories and methodologies relevant to the aims of the project.
2. To produce a scholarly work that enters into dialogue with relevant scholarship, that acknowledges the work of others, and that demonstrates familiarity with professional protocols of citation.
3. To produce a scholarly work of sufficient originality, substance, and persuasiveness such that ideally it can be revised to become a book.
4. To produce a scholarly work that demonstrates specialized competence in the primary and secondary literatures of a particular field and that contributes to the development of knowledge within that field.
5. To make responsible use of evidence in developing arguments.
6. To demonstrate familiarity with using digital media forms for conducting and sharing research.

**B. Program Level Learning Goals**
Graduates are expected to make a substantial and original contribution to theatre studies in the form of critical essays and a book-length dissertation; and to prepare such work for publication or public presentation.

2) In 2013, a Dissertation Experience Survey was sent out to all alumni of the program. Twenty-six, graduating between 2002 and 2013, responded to the survey and that information was collated by the student representative to the Curriculum Committee. The program also maintains detailed records of job placement through Spring 2014.

3) The large majority of responses to the Dissertation Experience Survey indicate that the dissertation learning goals, as originally formulated in 2011, provide an accurate gauge of what students actually accomplished in writing the dissertation. Some of the alumni questioned would have liked more feedback and guidance from the entire dissertation committee, rather than just the chair, but most were satisfied with the procedure. The most substantive suggestion made by the alumni was the request for regular dissertation colloquia. In fact, monthly colloquia have already been
implemented and students now have the opportunity to present work-in-progress, including dissertation chapters.

The 2014 job placement report concludes:
Our placement success has increased overall, especially when considering the challenging market. We have also improved our tracking record of alumni placement and career paths.
More graduates enter and stay in the profession, although –in keeping with national trends– it may take 1-3 years post-degree to obtain a tenure-track line. That said, our general placement record (66%) remains above the national average.
Fewer graduates take non-university / non-educational employment. Those who do work in related fields. Several work as independent artists, and one owns her own language and translation institute.
More recent graduates have obtained tenure-earning positions in NY schools, but the majority of tenure-track positions are still outside NYC.
The last two years have continued a trend in increasing the number of PhDs conferred, largely by improving program’s time to degree.

4) Since the Dissertation Learning Goals seem to square with the experiences of recent alumni, we suggest that they do not need to be changed.

5) This review, along with the Dissertation Experience Survey, will be examined by the Curriculum Committee and the central faculty, who will continue their close monitoring of dissertation students.